REMARKS

The applicants appreciate the examiner's thorough review of the application and claims and has cancelled, modified and explained the rejected claims.

3) Claims 6, 10, 11, 12, 14-18 and 20 were cancelled.
4) Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 13 were amended.

Claim 1 was amended.

Regarding the examiner's objection in point 13, Claim 1 includes a restriction that the telephone have an area code selection device switchable to select a current default state which is maintained independently of the keyed in area code digits. In contrast, Waldman describes a method to use the last area code (LAC) dialed by storing the LAC dialed (FIG 4A-1 Callout E) and inserting the LAC (FIG 4A-1 Callout D). .

Waldman's invention utilizes consecutive calls to the LAC, the last (most recent) area code dialed. In contrast, Claim 1 requires a user default area selection code selector that is independent of the last area code dialed. A default area code of Claim 1, once chosen, does not need to be chosen again, unless the user explicitly chooses a different default area code through the default area code selection device. The user can make an occasional long-distance call to a different area code without disrupting his predominant local dialing habits.

The referenced prior art does not show, teach or disclose the operation of the claimed invention, which is to restore the simplicity in dialing in an enhanced manner. Within approximately the last five years, the option for seven-digit dialing of local numbers has been discontinued in most areas in the US. Prior to this, a user could dial 7 digit numbers in his local area, occasionally dial 10 digits to calls out of his area, and return to dialing 7 digits in his local area. Our invention duplicates this environment – by setting a default area code to a local area code, subsequent local calls in that local code are 7 digit calls, and infrequent calls to non-local area codes are the same 10 digit calls as before. But in addition, this invention enhances the earlier system by also allowing the user to optionally choose other area codes as default area code.

Our invention does not require any user pre-thought as to which buttons to press or choose from. Once the user default area code is selected on the selection keypad, the user can simply dial their numbers. This aspect of the instant invention represents a simplification as compared to the prior art of Waldman. In Waldman's system, the state of the phone can change from day-to-day depending on the last number dialed. Waldman's requirement for the user to keep track of the last number dialed or to check the phone to see the last number dialed is avoided. This improves convenience in all uses and improves safety in car phone and other applications, where the user's attention and ability to examine his phone are limited.

Claim 13 was amended.

Regarding the examiner's objections in Point 24 with respect to Gabara, Gabara discloses in C4 L 60 setting a fixed timeout (a "predetermined amount of time") to recognize whether a seven-digit local number has been dialed. In this method, delays can result from waiting for the timeout period to expire before dialing. Gabara also discloses a method requiring individual exchanges of the local numbers to be in memory before guessing the associated area code (C4 L 61-64). Gabara also discloses a method in C5 L12-16 requiring the user to press additional keys before or after the local number.

In contrast, Claim 13 includes steps that compare the initial keyed in sequences to sequences that are invalid as local numbers.

A new claim 23 was added.